

# Alton Memorial Sleep Lab Helps Patients Rest Easy

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ALTON – Pamela Voyles can rest easy now that she has gotten a little “shut-eye” – at Alton Memorial Hospital’s Sleep Diagnostics Center.

Voyles, a Wood River, Ill., resident, was extremely anxious about coming to AMH for a sleep study. But she credits Rachael Beane, a tech in the sleep lab, for putting her mind at ease.

“I was scared to death about doing this,” Voyles said. “I was one of those people who hadn’t been to the doctor for 30 years. But I had some breathing issue and some other things. I ended up going to several doctors, and one of them was Dr. (Puja) Gurung.”

Dr. Gurung is a sleep medicine specialist with AMH and the BJC Medical Group of Illinois, and she recommended that Voyles have the sleep study done. She did one in March, another in June and a third one Sept. 12.

“Rachael is so very sweet,” Voyles said. “She took my fear away almost immediately. I would hire 10 of her if I could for something like this. You get hooked up to all these wires and then you’re supposed to go to sleep, it can be a little uncomfortable. But Rachael made it so much better.”

Voyles now has a CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) machine to help with her sleep apnea.

“I hate it, but I need it,” she said with a laugh. “I’ve had my best sleep in a long time since the third visit. I would recommend the sleep lab at Alton Memorial to anyone who needs help with this sort of thing.”

Beane said that she could tell that Voyles had many concerns from their first visit in March, but that she didn’t let that deter her from pursuing the correct treatment.

“Pamela has this drive about her that she will do what it takes to get better,” Beane said. “There were struggles, but there was also this spark in her eye, and I knew that was going to help her. By the third study (in September), she seemed more confident. That night I saw Pamela sleep the best she had slept from all three studies, and the next morning when I woke her up she stated that she felt great and wasn’t really that tired. I’m very proud of Pamela’s accomplishments and how far she has come. With her determination to get better and the amazing support of her husband, the sky is the limit.”

The AMH Sleep Diagnostics Center is located on the first floor of the hospital’s Smith Wing. Call 618-463-7545 for more information. Testing is provided for conditions including sleep apnea, periodic limb movement disorder, narcolepsy, REM sleep behavior disorder, chronic insomnia and other unusual behaviors during sleep.

Dr. Gurung’s office number is 618-433-6616, and Dr. Ajitesh Rai is the other sleep physician at AMH. His office number is 618-465-8666.